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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/021,665	12/07/2001	Bradley Jade Dickey	HILB / 723C1	5763

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EXAMINER

SHERR, CRISTINA O

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3621

DATE MAILED: 08/25/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/021,665

Applicant(s)

DICKEY ET AL.

Examiner

Cristina O Sherr

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 December 2001.  
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.  
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 is/are pending in the application.  
4a) Of the above claim(s) none is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 is/are rejected.  
7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.  
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.  
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)  
6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

### **DETAILED ACTION**

1. This communication is in response to the Application filed 20 July 2001. Claims 1-32 have been examined in this case.

#### ***Specification***

2. The specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101***

3. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

4. Claims 1-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

5. The basis of this rejection is set forth in a two-prong test of:

- (1) whether the invention is within the technological arts; and
- (2) whether the invention produces a useful, concrete, and tangible result.

6. For a claimed invention to be statutory, the claimed invention must be within the technological arts. Mere ideas in the abstract (i.e., abstract idea, law of nature, natural phenomena) that do not apply, involve, use, or advance the technological arts fail to promote the "progress of science and the useful arts" (i.e., the physical sciences as opposed to social sciences, for example) and therefore are found to be non-statutory subject matter. For a process claim to pass muster, the recited process must somehow apply, involve, use, or advance the technological arts.

7. In the present case, independent claims 1, 15, 29, 30, 31 and 32 only recite an abstract idea. The recited steps of merely receiving pet care products, services and information comprising: receiving pet care products, services and information from a supplier of pet death products, services and information, or of making such products available to a preferred provider; and as a preferred provider, dispensing the pet care products, services and information to pet owners do not apply, involve, use, or advance the technological arts since all of the recited steps can be performed in the mind of the user or by use of a pencil and paper, or by a person on foot, for example. These steps only constitute an idea of receiving pet care products and information. No technological arts are recited in the instant claims or any other claim in this application. As to technological arts recited in the specification, mere recitation in the specification (i.e., intended or field of use) or mere implication of employing a machine or computer or computer network to perform some or all of the recited steps does not confer statutory subject matter to an otherwise abstract idea unless there is positive recitation in the claim as a whole to breathe life and meaning into the specification. In the present case, none of the recited steps are directed to anything in the technological arts as explained above with the exception of the recitation in the specification that the method involves the use of the "World Wide Web".

8. Further, the dependent (2-14 and 16-28) claims merely give examples of "preferred providers" such as veterinarians or pet shops, or examples of pet care products such as pet memorial markers or pet urns. Looking at the claims as a whole, nothing in claims 1, 15, 29, 30, 31 or 32, or any other claim in this application recites

any structure or functionality to suggest that a computer or computer network performs the recited steps. Therefore, the specification is taken to merely recite a field of use.

9. Additionally, for a claimed invention to be statutory, the claimed invention must produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result. In the present case, the claimed invention produces the distribution of products and services for pet owners (*i.e.*, useful and tangible).

10. Although the recited process produces a useful, concrete, and tangible result, since the claimed invention, as a whole, is not within the technological arts as explained above, claims 1-32 are deemed to be directed to non-statutory subject matter.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

11. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. Claims 1-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ginter et al (US 6,389,402B1).

13. Ginter discloses systems and methods for the dissemination of information as well as secure transactions management and electronic rights protection over the internet. (e.g. col 1 ln 45 – col 3 ln 50). Although not disclosed in the claims, the specification in this case discloses the dissemination of information as well as the sale of products and services over a network such as the Internet.

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14. Ginter does not expressly disclose a method of disseminating information and selling products for petcare. However, these differences are found only in the non-functional data. Thus, this descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, see *Cf. In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401,404 (Fed.Cir.1983); *In re Lowry*, 32 F.3d 1579, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (Fed.Cir.1994).

15. Examiner's note: Examiner has cited particular columns and line numbers in the references as applied to the claims above for the convenience of the applicant. Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings in the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may be applied as well. It is respectfully requested from the applicant, in preparing the responses, to fully consider the references in entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the examiner.

### ***Conclusion***

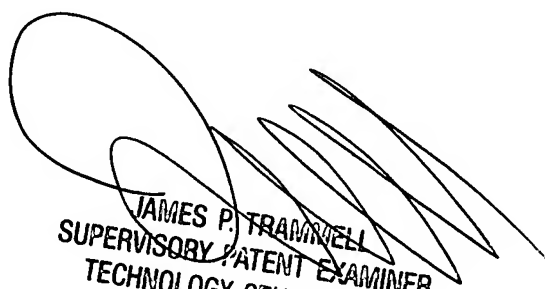
16. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cristina O Sherr whose telephone number is 703-305-0625. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 8:30 to 5:00.

17. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Trammell can be reached on 703-305-9768. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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18. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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